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Evolution in the Staff Potential of Workers and Peasants Militia During New Economic Policy

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Abstract: The study considers the difficulties encountered during the early period of the Soviet State formation. One of the most important of them was enforcement of law which required respective and competent bodies. The problem of competency was sharp enough for the mostly agrarian state with poor population educational level and financing of law enforcement officers. The study describes some of the most significant problems related to the situation of regime change.

Key words: Militia, new economic policy, worker's and peasant's militia, Bolshevik, NKVD, RSFSR

INTRODUCTION

Bolshevik's staff policy in the 1920's was defined by the theoretic thesis on the necessity to strengthen state power ("it is the strengthening of state power instead of its weakening that will cause a state's death)". This conceptual provision is directly linked to the idea of increasing subjective factor in the evolution of Russian society (the role of so-called objective conditions was reduced to a minimum while the role of our entities and their leaders became decisive and exclusive).

The policy aimed at establishing revolutionary law after transition to the New Economic Policy (NEP) required changes in the work of law enforcement bodies, especially militia. It was militia that was responsible for everyday support and maintenance of law and order at the local level. Staff always played an important role in the mechanism of the Soviet militia. Staff policy for the employees of Ural law enforcement bodies in the 1920's was targeted. This resulted in the triumph of main Bolshevik principle for staff recruitment of future employees belonging to a particular party and class. During recruitment, the attention was paid mostly to political loyalty to the detriment of professionalism, education and practical experience of applicants. Various units of law enforcement system were provided by staff pursuant to their legal status, place and role in the state mechanism. Thus, the militia's status as an auxiliary executive body predetermined reduced quantitative and qualitative requirements to its staff, unlike court, prosecutor's office and joint state political directorate (Russian OGPU).

Literature review: The problems of the Soviet militia were numerous; some of them have been considered by researcher of various periods as well as described in archive documents. The issues were vast and versatile so the reports of them are contained in multiple works.

The state of the RSFSR militia staff during transition to NEP was unsatisfactory both in quantitative and qualitative respects. It was confirmed by the survey of 13 governorate and regional militia offices which was carried out by chief office of Workers and Peasants Militia (WPM). The Glavmilitsiya's (Chief Militia Office) order based on the survey's results reported that "neglected and politically ignorant militiaman who has to rely on himself in studying his special and general duties... is lax and undisciplined in some places, militia with such staff is completely useless and becomes a useless financial burden for the republic's budget", this order also reported that militia commanding staff was mostly poorly trained and had poor knowledge of policy. Sometimes they were unable to work independently. This description can be illustrated by the militia in Yekaterinburg government where 50% of commanding staff failed to meet the requirements of their posts and 18% had to be immediately dismissed for alcohol abuse, bribes and official crimes (State Archive of Sverdlovsk), problems of the Soviet militia manifested itself also in its incomplete

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staff. At the beginning of 1921, the total number of the Soviet militia staff in the republic was 96377 persons, including 68156 militiamen (70.7% of the total number) and 5719 commanders (5.9% of the total number). The country's leaders took efforts to regulate militia staff size. The Council for Labor and Defense of September 30, 1921 defined the RSFSR militia staff size in 150 thousands persons. However, it was absolutely unreal to achieve those numbers during deep economic crisis. Vice versa, for various reasons, the Russian militia staff was reduced by 60% in 1921-1922 which resulted in a great shortage of militiamen and commanding staff in both the center and regions.

In 1921, the Ural faced shortage of militia staff in any and all the governments. The situation in the Tyumen and Chelyabinsk provinces was the gravest. Thus, there was one militiaman for 448 persons in the Chelyabinsk province up to August 1, 1921. After January 1, 1922, there was already one militiaman for 1856 persons (the figures increased by >4 times) (State Archive of the Russian Federation F. R. 393. Inv. 37. C. 139. Sh. 22). No militiaman was able to cope with that volume of work.

The order of the RSFSR NKVD of April 13, 1922 "rules for recruiting persons earlier employed in the interim government militia and tsar gendarmerie in militia and criminal investigation office" was aimed to cope with militia staff shortage. That order was not followed in practice. Moreover, campaigns were carried out to identify old specialists and dismiss them (SASR F.R. 456. Inv.1. C. 766. Sh. 147 overleaf). The purge at the beginning of the 1920s made the situation worse. It was carried out according to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee's decree (1922) "on review and additional supply of militia staff". Special committees were arranged in oblasts (districts), provinces and regions which included representatives of NKVD, All-Union Central soviet of trade unions, people's commissariat of justice, people's commissariat of labor as well as party and trade union bodies. They thoroughly examined all the staff and then identified and dismissed morally unstable and unfair persons who violated laws and discredited militia. The data of 52 RSFSR militia offices reported that 9284 persons were dismissed, including 2326 workers, 5564 peasants and 1250 other persons. The Izvestiya of April 4, 1923 reported that successful purge was provided by exclusively proletarian and class approach. In autumn 1923, the militia apparatus was renewed by almost a quarter after the purge had been performed. The RSFSR militia staff was to include 93940 persons while payroll included only 70463 employers. Thus, the staff was short of 23477 persons (25% of the due number) (OSACR F.R. 56. Inv. 1. C. 9. Sh. 188) while the number of policemen in tsarist Russia at the same territory was about 140 thousand persons, i.e., it was almost twice larger.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

If we analyze the evolution of the RSFSR militia size in the 1920's, we should, above all, note its negative dynamics. In general, militia size was reduced from 79761 to 38208 persons, i.e., twice, from October 1, 1922 to January 1, 1927. The number of overhead personnel was reduced even more from 27715 in 1922-6105 on January 1, 1927 (i.e. it was reduced in 4.5 times) (SARF F.R. 374. Inv. 6. C. 367. Sh. 104, 109; Inv. 65. C. 4. Sh. 22-26.).

The changes in the Ural proletarian militia size were similar to Russia-wide changes; however, they had some specific features. After the Ural region had been formed and reorganizations had been carried out, WPM units were organized in all 16 oblasts and 203 regions; however, they were not fully staffed. The units had 2533 employees (92.6%) out of core 2734 employees (State establishment F.4. Inv. 3. C. 461. Sh. 5-6; Inv. 2. C. 274. Sh. 31). The situation changed only by the end of the 1920s, when the needs for providing public order during total collectivization contributed to the growth of WPM size. On January 1, 1930, the Ural region militia included 7498 persons, including 39.6% of nation-wide militia and 56.2% of departmental militia. The size of nation-wide militia remained almost unchanged in comparison with 1928 while the size of departmental militia increased from 2161 persons to 4216 persons (195% growth) (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 24. Sh. 17).

The policy of simplification and costs reduction of apparatus and liquidation of some structural units was a leading measure aimed at solving the staff problem in WPM at the beginning of the 1920's. In accordance with the resolution of the 11th Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (R.C.P.(B.) Congress (March 27, 1922-April 1922) "On Financial Policy" (CPSU in Resolutions, 1983) establishments were transferred to the local account together with their staffs. In 1921, >20 million persons were on the state account while it was only 6 million persons including army at the beginning of 1922 and 3 million persons, including 1320 persons in the administrative and managerial staff at the end of 1922. In January, 1923, the decree of the RSFSR All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Council of People's Commissars transferred the expenses for militia to the local account (RSFSR Code of Justice, 1923, No. 3, Art. 58). There was a great shortage of financial resources; therefore, local authorities gave militia a very small place

in the expenditure part of budget because of economy. Thus, the expenses for militia amounted to 5.1% of the local budget of 1927/28 financial year, i.e., 61.982.300 rub. were allocated for militia while total budget was 1.211.099.900 rub. This percent was reduced to 5% in the next economic year of 1928/1929. Thus, the financial situation of the staff in the vast majority of regions became much worse. Due to a sharp deficit, it was impossible to satisfy the most elementary needs of public security bodies. D.V. Tatarkin, the Prosecutor of the Chelyabinsk government, wrote to D.I. Kurskiy, the Republic's Prosecutor. "Militia is hungry, frozen and bare-footed. Its efficiency is low. However, we should not judge it severely. It is the salary conditions for militia that is a key for all problems (OSACR F.R. 77. Inv. 1. C. 515. Sh. 10). Transfer to the local account resulted in significant difference in salaries of militiamen of the same categories in neighboring provinces and even within one province throughout the entire studied period. In 1929, the salary of a senior militiaman throughout the RSFSR varied from 43-74 rub.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Militia as an auxiliary body was provided by a residual model during all the studied period. The principle of social justice was violated to all the militiamen both in the center and at the local level. This manifested itself in the inadequate evaluation of their work in comparison with other employed citizen's work. A militiaman's salary in 1921 was 10 times lower than that of a courier. Besides, he received 2.6 times less flour in the product ration than a courier (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 37. C. 139. Sh. 22). It is in the 1920's that a large gap in the salaries of militiamen and other officials as well as persons employed in the industry emerged and then was kept.

Violation of the social justice principle manifested in the inadequate labor compensation in comparison with other employed citizens caused such negative things among WPM employees as worsened discipline; chronic staff shortage in spite of unemployment; extremely high level of employee turnover which reached 100% in some regions; frequent official crimes. The main crimes among militiamen were abuse of power, despotism, informal fees, bribery. It is in 1924 when central executive committee and council of people's commissars prohibited militia bodies to carry out various voluntary fees and donations transformed in some places into forced extortion. In 1925, the RSFSR NKVD demanded to stop the practice of establishing illegal charges on population.

Examples of despotism and lawlessness from the part of militiamen were numerous both in the center and at the local level. Thus, in 1925, a militiaman from the Kudymkar region of perm oblast made searches without orders. If doors of the houses to be searched were closed, he used to batter them down. In this very district, militiamen withdrawing devices for home-made alcohol distillation, got drunk and went on a affray (CDPESD F.4. Inv. 3. C. 344. Sh. 62). In Lebyazh'evsk region of Kurgan Oblast militiamen used prohibited methods of fighting against home-made alcohol brewing: they threw bottles with the alcohol (samogon) in the houses of wealthy peasants and then fined them (thus, peasants had to watch out for their houses from militiamen by rotation) (State Archive of Kurgan Oblast F.R. 315. Inv. 3. C. 59. Sh. 107). Bribery was a dangerous crime. Official data said that every year about 1400 militiamen in the republic were sentenced for bribery and theft. Greater amount of militiamen were subjected to disciplinary sanctions (Shvekov, 1970). At the end of the 1920s, militia's official crimes during the transition to general collectivization included dealing with aliens, i.e., relationships with rich peasants (SASR F.R. 349. Inv. 1. C. 8. Sh. 47.

OGPU reports also inform about unsatisfactory state of militia. Thus, in 1924, the OGPU Zlatoustovskiy department reported that the state of militia and criminal investigation office in the oblast was absolutely abnormal: abuse of alcohol and bungling; persons who had been prosecuted and condemned and had low qualification were employed in the militia. The 15 persons from militia and 5 persons from criminal investigation office should have been immediately dismissed. The OGPU Kungur department also fixed the growth of crimes in militia. The summary of the OGPU Tyumen department reported that "militiamen do not receive salary and uniform; therefore, they are not successful in fighting with delinquents, especially if it concerns home-made alcohol brewing (CDPESD F.4. Inv. 2. C. 69. Sh. 18; C.73. Sh. 80; C.73. Sh. 2).

In 1928, the militia apparatus was examined according to the decree signed by the people's commissariat collegiate organ of USSR worker's and peasant's inspectorate (Russian RKI or Rabkrin). The examination revealed the following drawbacks: weak ties between law enforcement bodies and workers, the high turnover in staff, weak party stratum, poorly qualified employers, weakly conducted work on the increase of cultural and educational level of employees, a lot of work that is not related to law enforcement and very poor life conditions. On June 28, 1928, the bureau of central control commission and collegiate organ of rabkrin adopted a special decree "on the results of examination for militia and criminal investigation bodies". As a consequence of the examination, 15% of staff were dismissed from militia (Razzakov, 1996).

Unworthy persons, former policemen and gendarmes were identified and withdrawn from WPM. Besides, a work was conducted to supply staff and improve its quality from the viewpoint of class. The head of the Republic's militia worked out and adopted the Instruction for recruitment (June 1923) to improve the staff quality (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 37. C. 92. Sh. 76). It paid a special attention to proletarian and class approach and involvement of workers and peasants in militia. Besides, vydvizhenchestvo, i.e., promoting workers and peasants to work in militia, became widespread since the beginning of the 1920's. Communists, Worker's and Peasant's Red Army (WPRA) commanding staff and former Cheka-OGPU employees were given preference in the recruitment of militia command staff. Experienced, efficient and firm chekists were much more frequently engaged in militia (OGPU Order 62, 2003 at the end of the 1920's. However, in December 1930, G.G. Yagoda wrote on this issue in a telegram that militia should not become chekist, as it is a conductor of Soviet laws and activities and militiamen should be something between a chekist and civil population.

It was considered very important that militia staff should involve more communists. The number of the R.C.P.(B.) members in Russian militia significantly grew during Lenin drafts in 1924-1925 and was 22% of the total number of employers in 1925 (Nikolaev, 1972). The R.C.P.(B.) members amounted 34.4% of total number in the Ural region militia at the moment of its formation (it exceeds republican level by 12.4%) (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 24. Sh. 12). However, party stratum was reduced later due to general purge in the party, including law enforcement bodies and high turnover in staff. By January 1, 1928, party composition of the RSFSR militia was as follows: the R.C.P.(B.) members in militia amounted to 25% of total number; All-Union Leninist Young Communist League (Russian Komsomol) members amounted to 5.4 and 6.2%, respectively non-party employees amounted to 69.9% of the total number.

On January 1, 1930, the proportion of communists in the Ural militia was merely 21.9% of its total amount (it was reduced by 8.5% in comparison with the level of January 1, 1929 and by 12.5% in comparison with that of 1924) (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 24. Sh. 17). However, the "party" index in industrial oblasts was higher than throughout the region and republic in general. Thus, in January 1, 1927, the R.C.P.(B.) members in Zlatoustovskiy oblast militia amounted to 26.1% of the total number while by January 1, 1928 it already amounted to 30% (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 19. Sh. 64) (it is higher than throughout the RSFSR by 5% and higher than throughout the region by 8.1%). Auxiliary status of militia predetermined that such index of staff quality as party membership (which was a priority for Soviet authorities) was much lower there than in other law enforcement bodies.

The class principle was the most important in selecting staff for militia. The Urals militia during its formation had the following indices: workers amounted to 33.3% of the total number, peasants to 57.3% and others to 9.4% (CDPESD F.4. Inv. 3. C. 461. SH. 5-6; Inv. 2. C. 274. SH. 31). This situation was typical for both the Ural region in general and its particular oblasts. In 1925, the party members amounted to 26% in the Tyumen Oblast militia, workers to 26%, peasants to 64%, office workers to 5%. The 205 persons of total 213 persons had elementary education. Besides, two militiamen were illiterate, so, 97% of the Tyumen oblast staff were illiterate (State Archive of Kurgan Oblast Public Entities F.3. Inv. 1. C. 420. Sh. 81). Therefore, an average militiaman in the Ural region was a non-party male peasant with elementary education.

The prevalence of peasants in the Ural militia caused high turnover in staff. The heads of internal affairs bodies reported that summer was the most unfavorable period for staff turnover (especially in militia) as employees often went to the villages for field works. Thus, in 1924, more than a half of the total staff (52.4%) in the Ural militia had less than a year term of service (SASR F.R. 102. Inv. 1 C. 30. Sh. 301: F.R. 2259. Inv. 1. C. 22. Sh. 17). High staff turnover also was observed in subsequent years. Thus, only for the last quarter of 1925, 717 persons (31.5% of the total number) voluntarily retired from the Ural region militia (2263 employees); 163 persons were dismissed for various crimes (CDPESD F.4. Inv. 3. C. 272a. Sh. 32). High staff turnover reduced possibilities to improve general and legal awareness of militiamen.

The turnover in the commanding staff was even higher (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 15. Sh. 5) which created a deficit of militia commanding staff in the region. For 1925, 12 heads of district militia were replaced in the Ural region (75% of total number); 77 heads of district departments were dismissed (35% of the total number), except for the rotation from one district into another (OSACR F.R. 56. Inv. 1. C. 9. Sh. 26). The turnover in the commanding staff was mainly caused by inefficient decisions in appointing for important posts. In 1925, 18.7% of the Ural region district militia departments had no heads while in 1926, only 6.3% of them.

The changes in the quantity and quality of the Ural militia at the second half of the 1920's can be traced through the example of Perm Oblast. From January 1, 1926 to January 1, 1927 the quantity of district militia increased by 23% (from 486-598 persons). The qualitative changes were proved by the increased number of employees with

work experience of 6 months to 1 year from 27% (of their general number) to 33.4% of 1-2 year from 25-32.4%, above 3 years from 10.3-11.9%. At the same time, the share of workers with work experience up to 6 months reduced from 37.7-21.1%. As a result, on January 1, 1927, the number of district militia employees with more than a year work experience was 44.3%. In 1925, their number was 35.4% (according to State Archive of Perm Oblast F.R. 127. Inv. 1. C. 36. Sh. 37). There were interesting changes in the social structure of district militia. In general, the number of workers increased, though insufficiently (compare, 192 persons on January 1, 1926 and 203 persons on January 1927) but a part of workers in the general staff of district militia reduced from 39.9-33.9%. However, the share of peasants for that period increased from 45.7-58.4%. The part of the R.C.P.(B.) members in militia reduced from 30.9% on January 1, 1926-24.2% on January 1, 1927. However, due to recruitment of young people, the part of Komsomol members for that period increased from 5.1-8.5%. The turnover in militia staff in Perm Oblast during 1926 kept steadily reducing: in January March it was 39.8, 20% in April June, 18% in July September, 10% in October December (SAPD F.R. 127. Inv. 1. C.36 Sh. 38). The turnover reduction was caused by some improvement in militia's material situation.

The implementation of class principle in staff policy resulted in some changes in social structure of republican and Ural militia. The following changes in junior militiamen structure were observed throughout the RSFSR on January 1928 in comparison with January 1, 1927: the workers amounted to 17.6% of the total number on January 1, 1927 while on January 1, 1928 they amounted to 21.5% (4% growth). At the same time, the number of office workers increased from 5.2-14.6% (9.4%) while the share of peasants in militia reduced from 74.7-61.9% (reduction by 12.5). The number of militiamen who finished schools increased from 5.4-9.7%. The 47% had >2 years working experience. In 1929, peasants amounted to 58.8% of the total RSFSR militia staff. Thus, junior staff, in spite of changes, mostly involved peasants while the stratum of workers was insignificant; its educational and professional level was low. Commanding staff followed general tendency, too. The stratum of workers was also small, respectively: 17.6% on January 1, 1927 and 17.4% on January 1, 1928 but the share of peasants reduced from 70.3-54.4% at that period. However, the share of office workers increased from 8.6-26.4% (growth by 3 times). The analysis of archive data on social structure of the Ural militia from 1925-1929 showed that it was very difficult to create a militia that would consist of workers. There were several reasons for that. First of all, working in militia involves a lot of responsibility while salary was quite lower than that of workers. Therefore, there was a huge turnover in the staff. The engagement of workers was not efficient: they either retired themselves or were dismissed during purges (SASR F.R. 2259. Inv. 1. C. 51. Sh. 70). Indeed, the share of workers in the Ural militia was 33.3% while in 1929, it was 28.9% (reduction by 4.4%); the share of peasants did not change much that is to say: 57.3% in 1924 and 56.6% in 1929. However, 1929 has a positive dynamics in comparison with 1928: the number of workers increased from 27.4-28.9% (growth by 1.5%). The number of others also increased from 11.5-14.5% (growth by 3%). The share of peasants reduced from 62.1-56.6% (decrease by 5.5%) (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 24. Sh. 17). The share of workers in militia in the Ural industrial districts was much higher than Russian-wide indices. Thus, on January 1, 1927, the workers in the Zlatoust Oblast militia amounted to 45.7% of the total district militia staff while on January 1, 1928-33.6%) (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 19. Sh. 64). In spite of significant reduction (by 12.1%), the share of workers in the Zlatoust Oblast militia exceeds this index throughout the RSFSR by 13.7% (compare: 19.9% and 33.6%) (SARF F.R. 393 Inv. 83. C. 2. Sh. 38 ob; SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 19. Sh. 64). However, militia in the region, like in the republic in general, remained mostly peasant. Therefore, most workers had elementary education. The 1499 militiamen worked in the villages in the Ural region, the load per each militiaman exceeded the norm: the number of population varied from 6-7 thousands persons for one militiaman.

Increasing the level of the staff education and qualification was a key measure to raise the quality of militia staff. In the 1920's, educational characteristics of militia operational staff largely reflected the processes of Russia's gradual coping with age-old illiteracy. The situation with educated staff was unfavorable even in the RSFSR NKVD Glavmilitsiya office. Persons with higher education amounted only to 4.2% of the total staff by the middle of 1921, persons with secondary education to 50%, others were of poor education (i.e., 45.8% of total number). There was no one with higher education among the militia commanding staff in the RSFSR governments and only 14 persons had documents confirming their secondary education (From the history of, 1980). Most militiamen (89.1% of the total staff) had elementary education. Fighting against illiteracy among WPM employees was a big issue. This task was mainly solved only by the 5th anniversary of the Soviet Militia establishing. In Yekaterinburg government, they coped with illiteracy among employees by the December of 1921 (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 37. C. 75b. Sh. 14). The 8778 militiamen received literacy training during 9 month in

1922. On October 1, 1921, the RSFSR had 201 schools to liquidate illiteracy and 12 schools to liquidate illiteracy among WPM employees. Active work in this direction enabled the RSFSR NKVD to publish an order that prohibited to hire illiterate persons to militia (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 3. C. 64. Sh. 5).

As employees were poorly educated and qualified and had a faint idea of the Soviet legislation, people's commissariat of justice paid much attention to their professional level increasing in the 1920's. In the very 1920s, 25 various schools and courses were open to train employees in the RSFSR, including 9 schools for militiamen and 5 for commanding staff (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 31. C. 37. Sh. 300).

Special training and professional development of junior militiamen and commanding staff took special place in increasing the quality of militia. Gradually the structure for militia staff training began to be formed during 1921. In April, 1921, the RSFSR NKVD approved provision on courses for militia commanding staff. It was the first document to state their structure and organization in the country. In December of that year, the RSFSR NKVD approved "Temporary Regulation on Courses for Higher Commanding Staff of Republic's Militia" which defined the order of acceptance, the arrangement of courses and plan of classes (Afanasiev and Yu, 2001). The militia junior commanding staff was trained in the reserve schools. In December 1921, there were 97 governorate and 287 district reserve schools in the RSFSR (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 38. C. 25. Sh. 4).

Various forms of after-school professional training for militiamen began to develop in 1922. There were permanently functioning clubs, obligatory evening courses, etc. On October 24, 1922, the RSFSR NKVD approved the regulation "On Provincial Militia Schools" which stated the goal of forming schools, categories of graduates, etc (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 37. C. 14. Sh 22 ob, 23, 24) in order to eliminate legal illiteracy of militiamen.

Qualitative and quantitative characteristics of information to study and choice of studied disciplines were set according to the management conception that dominated in the society. Professional activity of militiamen required a special approach to their selection and training; therefore, it was almost always power structures that dealt with this issue. The year 1924 became crucial for militiamen's training as these issues were taken under control of both central and local authorities. The improving the militiamen' qualification were controlled by party bodies. Thus, in 1924, the Tyumen Oblast committee of the R.C.P.(B.) pointed to the head of district criminal investigation office at the necessity to raise the staff qualification (SAPPETD F.3. Inv. 1. C. 126. Sh. 51).

On February 23, 1923, the RSFSR NKVD published a circular (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 50. C. 5. Sh. 71-71 overleaf) which recommended administrative departments of provincial and district executive committees of the Soviets to take measures to improve the study of militiamen and give financial assistance to militia schools and reserve schools. On August 21, 1924, the RSFSR NKVD approved the regulation "On "Schools for Militia Middle Commanding Staff" which stated the goal of their establishment, conditions for application and rules of study in them (SARF F.R. 393. Inv. 50. C. 5. Sh. 315-318). By the end of 1926, the RSFSR NKVD CAD was responsible for 3 schools of two years term for middle commanding staff and capacity of 195 persons in a year. Besides, there were three schools of one year term for junior commanding staff and with capability of 552 persons. Local authorities took the easy route. Junior commanding staff was trained in reserve schools where selection of trainees and their preparation often were occasional and non-systematic. In April 1925, the RSFSR NKVD Central Administrative Department (CAD) established fiscal regional schools for junior commanding staff of militia for militia commissioners training, assistants of volost militia heads, senior militiamen and criminal investigation officers. Ural Regional School was opened in accordance with the order No. 42/n (Shetkin, 2002) on the Republic's militia. In addition to schools organizing, the RSFSR NKVD was concerned with establishing of short-term courses which was caused by huge turnover in militia staff at the volost level and poor financing.

Improvement of the organization of staff training was discussed at the meeting of WPM heads (initiated by the RSFSR NKVD militia department) which took place in April, 1928. The meeting resulted in a conclusion that it was necessary to prepare more qualified middle commanding staff (earlier, the emphasis was put on preparing junior commanding staff). On January 1, 1929, there were 7 fiscal schools throughout the RSFSR with 1130 students, 6 schools of local administrative departments with 600 trainees and 20 short-termed courses with the capacity of 1000 persons per year. Besides, NKVD militia department informed that the programs on military disciplines for militia schools for middle commanding staff were worked out. Their analysis indicated a clear-cut goal of teaching military subjects militarization.

We think that militarization of learning together with enhanced political training of militiamen was defined by sharpened situation in the country due to the course on industrialization and collectivization.

The course and schools preparation resulted in some improvement of the Russian militia's quality. At the

beginning of January 1929, WPM employees with school professional training amounted to 12.4% while district overseers and heads of volost and district militia to 35% of the total number.

On March 6, 1926, the Ural regional executive committee of the Soviets decided to establish district schools for training junior militiamen in the region and claimed "do not accept to work those militiamen who did not go through special training". Taking into account that the budget of districts did not allow to prepare reserve in each district, it was offered to concentrate their training in the regional school (OSACR F.R. 75. Inv. 1. C. 208. Sh. 156). In 1926, the number of trainees from each district was defined for recruiting to the Sverdlovsk regional school for militia junior commanding staff. Th 80 militiamen and 20 criminal investigation officers in total (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. D. 20. Sh. 117). However, the Sverdlovsk school for junior commanding staff and Omsk school for middle commanding staff did not meet the needs of Ural district for qualified employees. Therefore, it was expected that activities to increase militiamen's qualification at the local level should be carried out in the form of classes under the guidance of investigators, once in a week in a town and twice in a month in districts (SASR F.R. 2259. Inv. 1. C. 51. Sh. 71). In 1927, the reserve school actively functioned in Shadrinsk Oblast. 60% of the district militia staff was trained there. In Kurgan Oblast, 100% of district militiamen junior enlisted went through initial training in the reserve school (SASR F.R. 2259. Inv. 1. C. 51. Sh. 71). In Jule August 1926, People's Commissariat of Justice performed the audit and reported that legal awareness of all law enforcement units had been improved (SASR F.R. 2259. Inv. 1. C. 30. Sh. 67).

The data of 1927 (i.e., the end of the 1920's as well) reported educational level of the Soviet militia remained very low. Workers with higher education amounted only to 0.1% of the total number with secondary education to 7.4% and elementary education to 92.4%. The education indices of the Ural militiamen were almost similar to that of the Russia-wide level. Thus, on January 1, 1927, 92.3% of the total Zlatoustovskiy Oblast militia staff had elementary education (SASR F.R. 854. Inv. 1. C. 19. Sh. 64). The indices of education and qualification level among militia commanding staff both in the Ural region and throughout the RSFSR were lower than these in the court and prosecutor's office bodies. This was quite in line with the militia's status as an auxiliary executive body. At the end of the 1920's, militia commanding staff was of a peasant origin; >90% had elementary education, <1 out of 1000 had higher education. In 1929, the turnover in the commanding staff of district units was 58%. Only 25% of them went through professional training necessary for the occupied post.

CONCLUSION

It was hard to solve a staff problem for militia in the Ural at the studied period due to weak financing and damaging impact of the Civil War. The share of workers in WPM in industrial districts of the region was much higher than their Russian-wide share; however, ordinary militiamen were mainly peasants. The prevalence of peasants in district militia staff resulted in its high turnover; therefore, their low educational and professional level was inevitably worsening. The regime in the Ural supported by politically loyal though uneducated persons who were either workers or peasants. It was staff policy of the party with regard to state apparatus, including law enforcement bodies that was the main leverage to carry out political decisions.

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